

## ASCM Insights

### 6 Intelligent Automation Trends on the Rise

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In recent years, there's been a significant shift in business priorities as we face continuous disruption, process inefficiencies, talent shortages, and pressure to reduce operating costs while maintaining growth. Many supply chain organizations now place greater emphasis on future-proofing, often turning to intelligent automation technology as a solution.

Intelligent automation is a suite of next-gen solutions, including artificial intelligence (AI), business process automation, robotic process automation (RPA) and software test automation. Analytics, machine learning (ML), natural language processing and intelligent document processing are key elements, delivering automation that businesses need to stay competitive in an ever-evolving marketplace.

According to a survey by [Intelligent Automation Network](#), 64% of organizations currently use intelligent automation, and 36% plan on implementing it this year. This is helping organizations automate end-to-end, business-critical operations; transform the way they work; increase productivity; and support exponential growth. Following are some of the major intelligent automation trends on the rise. Consider how to best invest in, and implement them in, your network.

**1. Democratization of technology.** Low- and no-code platforms have existed for several years, but their adoption has been relatively slow until recently. In the past, these platforms were often seen as less capable than traditional coding approaches and were primarily used for building simple applications or prototypes. However, there's been a growing recognition of the benefits of low- and no-code platforms, including faster time-to-market, reduced development costs and greater agility in responding to changing business requirements. As a result, many enterprises now use them to devise more complex and mission-critical applications and get ahead of the new thrust toward digital transformation. These technologies are poised to go mainstream, enabling the [democratization of technology](#).

**2. Process discovery and mining.** A widely popular approach to digital transformation is process mining. This involves reading and analyzing the data received from various enterprise solutions — enterprise resource planning, customer relationship management, content management systems — to identify patterns or variations in the data. This approach helps organizations monitor and measure the efficiency of their business processes through analytical insights. Plus, according to [Gartner](#), 50% of RPA scripts will be generated automatically by the end of 2023, which means process discovery is another trend to watch in the year ahead.

**3. Generative AI.** Generative AI combines two technologies — AI algorithms and ML methods — which enable software to learn from existing data and develop new and original content. Organizations can use these tools to write code for software development rapidly and process images and audio files to accelerate product and solution delivery. This will continue to empower companies to improve the efficiency of existing business processes and maximize technology investments.

**4. Conversational AI for employee and customer experience.** Consumer expectations have changed drastically. Today, people expect nothing less than a five-star customer experience. And if brands fail to deliver, consumers will quickly move on to the next option. In such a competitive landscape, having a customer experience automation-first strategy is essential. Conversational AI will become the new reality of next-gen total customer experience automation.

**5. Value-based verticalized offerings.** The demand for industry-specific, baseline RPA solutions that can be customized according to business requirements has significantly increased in recent years. Such a solution ensures that professional partners with domain-level expertise will play a crucial role in creating cost-effective, pre-built standard automation solutions that can be effectively deployed in customer environments in the coming years. The maturity of the automation solutions can be further enhanced by customizing them according to the need of customers for each vertical.

**6. Cloud-hosted RPA.** The cloud offers the ability to automate the RPA software process swiftly by saving organizations time to download, install and upgrade a product. To evaluate the product capability, businesses need only an internet connection. Further, integrated cloud apps, such as cognitive services, can seamlessly reduce total cost of ownership and scale automation projects. RPA vendors will need to ensure the security of their services by guaranteeing uptime, compliance and firmer data controls.

## Changing the future of work

In a world where shorter times-to-market have become a mandate, it's imperative that organizations adopt intelligent automation. The trends discussed in this article will be key components to successful implementation and staying ahead of whatever new supply chain challenge is on the horizon.

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